The Melville Society NEWSLETTER

MARCH, 1952

Volume VIII Number 1

The *Moby-Dick* centennial celebration at Oberlin College consisted of three major events. On November 13, Walter E. Bezanson spoke on "*Moby-Dick:* Work of Art," On November 16, the Oberlin Conservatory orchestra performed Giorgio Ghedini's "Concerto dell' Albatro, da *Moby-Dick.*" On December 6, Henry A. Murray gave his lecture, "In Nomine Diaboli."

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MELVILLE OFFPRINT SERVICE

To the Melville scholar interested in building up his own collection of scholarly materials, one of the most persistent problems is that of securing copies of periodicals in which articles on Melville appear. In the hope of solving this problem, at least in part, Merton M. Sealts proposes the establishment of an offprint service.

According to his plan, the Society would purchase for subscribers to the service offprints of all articles on Melville appearing in scholarly periodicals under the authorship of members of the Society. It is estimated that such offprints could be purchased for not much more than 10 to 15 cents per copy. A subscription fee of one dollar would entitle the subscriber to approximately eight offprints.

The plan, of course, would require the cooperation of members whose articles are being published. Each author would be asked to order, in addition to offprints he might desire for his own use, an extra supply for the Society. These would be distributed to subscribers by the secretary.

Members who are interested in becoming subscribers to such a service are urged to notify the secretary on a postal card. No fee should be sent in at this time. If a sufficient number show interest in the idea, an announcement regarding fees will appear in the June issue of the Newsletter.

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NOTES AND NEWS

Melville's Quarrel with God, by Lawrance Thompson (Princeton University Press), is to be published in March. $6.00?

The Portable Melville, edited by Jay Leyda (Viking Press), was published on January 25. $2.50.

The secretary addressed two groups of students and faculty in the English department of the University of Wyoming on March 7. Subjects: (1) *Moby-Dick,* (2) *Pierre* and *Billy Budd.*

Selected Writings of Herman Melville was a fall, 1951, addition to the Modern Library Giants (Random House). $2.45.

The centennial edition of *Moby-Dick,* edited by Luther S. Mansfield and Howard P. Vincent (Hendricks House), appeared on February 14. $5.00 (trade edition).

Mary E. Dichmann, of Southwestern Louisiana Institute, presented a paper on "Absolutism in Melville's *Pierre*" at the annual meeting (in Baton Rouge) of the South-Central Modern Language Association last October 19.

Jean Simon, of the University of Lille (France), is reported to be engaged in research on Melville as a Fulbright scholar at the University of Rochester.

The *Anglo Norse,* a French whaling vessel (Captain Henri Pelliet) has reported the capture of a 56-ton albino sperm whale off the coast of Peru during the past summer's cruise.

Oliver H. P. Garrett, author of the scenario for the John Barrymore motion picture, "Moby Dick," died (aged 58) on February 22.

The Berkshire Athenaeum (Pittsfield, Mass.) has recently announced the asquisition of a first American edition of *Moby-Dick* as a gift from Mrs. Russell A. Hibbs of New York City. The copy is bound in green cloth with orange end-papers.

Among the books that Ernest Hemingway would like to read (as reported by John K. Hutchens in the New York *Herald Tribune* on December 9) is "*The Critics: An Harpooner's Story,* by Herman Melville."

T. O. Mabbott recently was shown eating whale meat with friends at Hunter College on CBS television. He mentioned Moby Dick.

Carl Van Vogt is doing research on "Melville and the Fine Arts" under the direction of Harrison Hayford at Northwestern University.

Mr. and Mrs. Hugh W. Hetherington entertained a class in advanced American literature at the University of Wyoming with a "*Moby-Dick* dinner" on March 2. Lighting was furnished by whale oil candles and lamps. Chowder and baked beans were served, and the group sang appropriate nautical ballads.

Harrison Hayford is writing a book on Melville's imagery to be entitled *Melville's Prisoners, and Related Images.*

Howard C. Horsford's new edition of the 1856-1857 journal *(Journal of a Visit to Europe and the Levant, October 11, 1856—May 6, 1857)* was completed and accepted by Princeton University as a doctoral dissertation last fall.

Merton M. Sealts is preparing a supplement to his check-list of Melville's reading, to appear in a forthcoming issue of the Harvard Library *Bulletin.* Those desiring copies (at about 50 cents each) should write directly to Professor Sealts (Lawrence College, Appleton, Wis.). Orders must be placed no later that May 1.

A review of *Moby-Dick* and *The Melville Log* (Leyda), prepared by Edward Larocque Tinker, was scheduled for broadcast to Spain, Portugal, and Latin American countries over the "Voice of America" during February.

The *Index to Little Magazines,* published annually by the Alan Swallow Press of Denver (Colo.), lists articles on Melville which have appeared in periodicals of limited circulation.

Establishment of an annual Berkshire Athenaeum Herman Melville Essay Competition for students in the Pittsfield (Mass.) high schools has just been announced. The contest, aimed at stimulating interest in Melville and his works among young readers, is the brain child of Samuel T. Sukel of Pittsfield, who is contributing $500 to provide seven prizes per year for the next five years. Essays must be submitted annually before November 14, anniversary of the American publication of *Moby-Dick.* Other news from Pittsfield is that the library has begun a search for Melville items among residents of Berkshire County.

The Chapin Library at Williams College gave a tea on February 14 to honor Luther S. Mansfield and publication of the Mansfield-Vincent edition of *Moby-Dick.* Professor Mansfield on the same day discussed the edition over radio station WBEC in Pittsfield.

Query: Pictures of Captain Ahab represent sometimes the right leg and sometimes the left leg as the whalebone member. Which is correct?

FINANCIAL REPORT

It will be recalled that, because of unusual financial obligations incurred in 1950, the Society ended that year with a deficit. While the deficit was reduced in 1951, it has not yet been wiped out. If all members who have not yet done so will pay their dues ($2) for 1952, however, is will be possible not only to clear away the deficit but to end the year with a small surplus.

On hand, January 1, 1951		$ 4.78
Income to December 31, 1951		
Membership fees paid	$182.00	
Interest on deposit	.25	
		187.03
Expenses paid		
Printing	97.98	
Postage	42.84	
Conference	13.37	
Secretarial	8.62	
Envelopes	6.71	
Bank charge	.40	
Incidentals	2.00	
		171.92
Deficit, January 1, 1951		69.62
Old accounts paid		15.11
Deficit, January 1, 1952		$ 54.51

All bills are now being paid currently except one account of $48.20 still owed to the Harvard Library. If dues continue to arrive as they have during the first two months of 1952, this account can be paid off by June.

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ADDITION TO THE MELVILLE LOG

August, 1847. Melville, Herman, Esq., New York, to Elizabeth K., daughter of Chief-Justice Shaw, Boston, Aug. 4. *(New England Historical and Genealogical Register,* I, 380, Oct., 1847, in list of prominent marriages).

Miscellaneous information: When Horace Mann, America's greatest educator, introduced in the Massachusetts legislature his Temperance Bill (1832) prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors on the Sabbath, Melville's grandfather (Major Thomas Melvill, "last of the Cocked Hats") was one of the few legislators who supported the measure. It finally passed in 1837, when Mann was president of the state Senate.

THE *Melville Society* NEWSLETTER IS PUBLISHED QUARTERLY FOR MEMBERS OF THE Melville Society, a group of literary scholars and others interested in the life and works of Herman Melville. The Society seeks to facilitate the exchange of information among its members, to stimulate the study of Melville's life and works, and to encourage literary, historical, and bibliographical research. Executive committee: Willard Thorp (1952), president; Eleanor Melville Metcalf (1953); Merton M. Sealts (1954); William H. Gilman (1955); Walter E. Bezanson (1956). The annual membership fee of two dollars includes subscription to the Newsletter and other services. Address Tyrus Hillway, secretary, Colorado State College, Greeley, Colorado.